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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



State Department review completed

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OK
Israel: Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, whose Mapai party increased its plurality in the 3 November election, has succeeded in organizing a broad coalition, on terms which increase his control over the cabinet. The same parties participated in the previous coalition, and no new policy trends appear likely. The new government's offer of nonaggression pacts to the Arab states and its proposal for regional disarmament are certain to be rejected by the Arabs. [redacted]

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NO
Morocco: [Strains between the royal palace and the leftists who dominate Morocco's cabinet have been brought to a head by the suspension earlier this week of the principal leftist newspaper and arrest of two of its editors for criticizing the police and persons close to King Mohamed V. Efforts will probably be made to avoid a showdown until after President Eisenhower's visit, but Premier Ibrahim, who presumably sanctioned the press campaign against the palace, has been placed in a difficult position.] [redacted]

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[redacted] (Page 3)

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OK
Belgian Congo: Brussels' announced willingness to accelerate the formation of a federal Congolese government may provide the basis for a compromise with nationalist leaders who are currently boycotting local elections in the Congo. Local demands for "immediate" independence, however, have prompted a warning by one group that the lower Congo may attempt to secede from the colony on 1 January unless elections for a Congolese assembly are moved up from August to February 1960. Further negotiations will probably take place while King Baudouin is in the Congo. [redacted]

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NO
Nepal-Czechoslovakia: [Katmandu intends to announce the establishment of diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia within two weeks. Relations with Malaya will be announced at the same time. The move apparently reflects Prime Minister Koirala's policy of expanding Nepal's foreign relations and maintaining a balance between Western and bloc contacts. Until]

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Relations with Poland were announced on 25 November, Nepal's only bloc ties were with Moscow and Peiping. Relations with Czechoslovakia will give the bloc an additional channel for further economic aid to Nepal.

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III. THE WEST

No
*Haiti: The Haitian cabinet resigned on 17 December after a heated discussion over an internal jurisdictional problem. The resignations have been accepted by President Duvalier. This cabinet crisis is symptomatic of the problems facing the weak regime of dictator Duvalier. There is as yet no information on the composition of a new cabinet.

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IV. SIGNIFICANT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

(Available during the preceding week)

Prospects for Iraq. SNIE 36.2-5-59. 15 Dec 59.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Coalition Government Organized in Israel

The government coalition which Prime Minister Ben-Gurion has presented to the Israeli Knesset, following six weeks of negotiation, includes the five parties in the previous coalition. The left-wing Achdut Haavoda and Mapam parties were included at the last minute after they reached a compromise with the prime minister on the issue of collective cabinet responsibility.

Ben-Gurion has resented independent stands taken in the past by these left-wing partners, and last July he dissolved the coalition when Achdut Haavoda and Mapam members refused to resign after opposing the government's decision to sell arms to West Germany. As presented by Ben-Gurion on 16 December, the new coalition agreement stipulates that an opposing vote or an abstention on a government motion is tantamount to resignation.

This automatic procedure for dealing with defections, together with the coalition's broad base of support, increases the prime minister's control over the cabinet. His government would not necessarily fall even if both left-wing parties should oppose him on an issue. Together they command only 16 of the 86 Knesset members who support the coalition, while the total number of seats in the assembly is 120. Ben-Gurion's moderate Mapai (labor) party increased its plurality from 40 to 47 seats in the 3 November election.

No radical change in either domestic or foreign policy is likely. Israel has announced that it plans to propose regional disarmament and substitution of nonaggression treaties for the armistice agreements with its Arab neighbors. The Israeli proposals are certain to be rejected by the Arabs.

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New Political Crisis May Be Imminent in Morocco

[Strains between the royal palace and leftists in the Moroccan cabinet who are backed by the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP) have been brought to a head by the arrest of the director and editor of the UNFP's daily newspaper At Tahrir for criticizing the police and persons close to King Mohamed V. The paper has been indefinitely suspended, but the UNFP--formed last September as a patriotic movement and not a political party--apparently is preparing to issue another Arabic-language daily under the name of Er Rai Alam.

The press campaign was part of the UNFP leaders' long-standing effort to have army and police forces subordinated to the appropriate ministries rather than to the palace, an issue underlying the fall of the rightist Balafrej cabinet last year. The campaign presumably was sanctioned by Premier Abdallah Ibrahim, who is strongly supported by the UNFP but whose connections with the organization are not yet clear.

UNFP leaders apparently were encouraged last fall when the King did not endorse recommendations of the crown prince, who is also army chief of staff, and other rightist groups that the army be used to suppress the leftists. Having created five battalions of elite troops, which he hopes to have equipped with American arms, the crown prince asked last week for a clandestine shipment of \$600,000 worth of American arms to be distributed to loyal elements of the population. This plea was subsequently strongly endorsed by the King.

Efforts will probably be made to avoid a showdown until after President Eisenhower's visit to Casablanca on 22 December, but Ibrahim--whose government was installed a year ago as a stopgap measure--has been placed in a difficult position.

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New Moves in Belgian Congo Political Crisis

Brussels' announced willingness in principle to accelerate the formation of a federal Congo government may provide the basis for a compromise with nationalist leaders on a timetable for Congolese independence. In Leopoldville, however, a spokesman for the Abako party stated that unless the date of elections for a Congolese assembly is moved up to this coming February, the Abako-dominated Lower Congo area will attempt to secede from the Congo on 1 January. While the threat may represent a bargaining position rather than an ultimatum, it underscores the gulf which remains between Brussels and the nationalists. Tension will continue high unless a compromise is reached, and further violence could result from local elections which are being held over nationalist opposition.

Belgium's Congo Minister de Schrijver--following recent consultations with Congolese leaders--announced on 16 December several significant shifts from Brussels' earlier declarations. He assured Congolese political leaders that they would be included, along with representatives of the Belgian parliament and other Congolese elements, in the round-table conference scheduled for mid-January. The purpose of the conference would be to achieve general agreement on institutional structure, powers of the institutions, and the electoral system at the provincial and national levels.

Meanwhile, Belgian concern over the Congo situation is also pointed up by King Baudouin's sudden departure for the Congo on 16 December. He was well received there during a tour in 1955, and Brussels apparently hopes that his presence there now will help ease the tension, at least for the remainder of the election period.

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